**Session Plan for:** Caring for your horse

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| Name |  | Level | Platinum |
| Topic | Caring for your horse | Lesson | 1 |
| Subject | Behaviour | Location | Yard and classroom |
| Resources & Requirements | Flip chart or board, fields with horse in, access to online research | | |

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| Time | Activity |
| *10 mins* | INTRODUCTION:  Welcome  Safety information  Give aims, timetable and brief outline of lesson content |
| *60*  *mins* | **ACTIVITIES:**   1. Revision: as a group create list of horse’s natural behaviour and how this is affected by domestication 2. Ask group to think about the ideal environment to keep a horse in and compare thoughts and ideas 3. Discuss how yard facilities/health conditions/other factors can influence how horse is kept 4. Discuss different ways of grouping horses for turnout, why each might be used and pros/cons 5. Go out to a field and watch the herd dynamics – what happens if another horse is turned out with the group? 6. Discuss introducing a new horse to the herd; do the group think there are any potential issues? 7. Discuss ways of introducing a new horse into an existing group. What would be an ideal situation/set up to do this? 8. Look at the yard facilities and field layout available and create a potential plan of how to introduce a new horse to the herd 9. Discuss ways of maximising the use land/facilities available. |
| *10 mins* | SUMMARY  For homework research methods of field and stable enrichment for equines |
|  | Progression  Reflect on how turnout and access to other horses may affect a horse’s behaviour |

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| Name |  | Level | Platinum |
| Topic | Caring for your horse | Lesson | 2 |
| Subject | Stable enrichment | Location | Yard and classroom |
| Resources & Requirements | Treat balls, variety of types of haynet such as small holed nets/trickle nets/hay bags, stable toys, licks, apples/carrots/other suitable treats to make treat string, bailer twine or similar, suitable horses in stables, access to online videos of stable enrichment ideas | | |

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| Time | Activity |
| *20 mins* | INTRODUCTION:  Welcome  Safety information  Introduce subject for today: Stable enrichment |
| *50*  *mins* | **ACTIVITIES:**   1. Discuss the group findings on stable enrichment 2. Go to the yard and spend time observing horses in their stables. Record how much they move around and any behaviour observed. 3. Discuss the layout of the stable yard 4. Split into smaller groups to discuss and make list of reasons why a horse might have to be stabled for long periods of time and how this might affect them?  * Need to move/turnout * Interaction with other horses * Weight gain * Lack muscle/stiffness * Boredom  1. Discuss ideas for keeping horse occupied for longer in the stable.   Hay ration:   * horses need to chew * how much hay horse needs (link to 2% bodyweight) * methods of feeding * how to make ration last longer/horse eat slower  1. If possible monitor how long it takes the horse to eat his normal hay ration from his normal net/method (doesn’t have to be exact e.g. he has it at 7am and gone by 12pm) 2. Split the horse’s hay ration into two smaller nets and hang on opposite sides of stable where possible and monitor. Ask the group to observe. Can experiment with haybags/trickle nets/etc 3. Treat balls/toys/licks – ask if anyone uses these. If you have access to some, give them to a horse that doesn’t normally have one and observe the reaction 4. Stable mirrors – discuss why these might help settle a horse. Any potential issues. If you don’t have access to stable toys/mirrors etc research online videos that can be shown and discussed instead 5. Treat strings – make your own treat strings!  * Discuss suitable food to make them with. Any potential issues for specific horses? * Tie them up in the stable and observe how long they keep the horses occupied for! |
| *10 mins* | SUMMARY  Discuss the findings/observations from the session  The importance of keeping horses occupied in their stable |
|  | Progression  Research other methods of stable and field enrichment |

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| Name |  | Level | Platinum |
| Topic | Caring for your horse | Lesson | 3 |
| Subject | Carrot stretches | Location | Yard |
| Resources & Requirements | Carrots (lots of!) cut lengthways into strips or other suitable treats, suitable horses, headcollers and leadropes, suitable area for stretching, access to online tutorials of carrot stretches | | |

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| Time | Activity |
| *20 mins* | INTRODUCTION:  Welcome  Safety information  Introduce session on carrot stretches  Talk about why stretches are useful and how they can benefit your horse.  Dynamic stretches which means the horse moves himself and therefore reduces risk of over stretching and potential injury. Explain why it is important not to force the horse during stretches |
| *60*  *mins* | **ACTIVITIES:**   1. Discuss the importance of warming muscles up before stretching (this session can be done after a ridden session). 2. Demonstrate methods of how to warm the horse up 3. Demonstrate stretches shown in the booklet. Include any other suitable stretches that you are familiar with. Remind participants about positioning of themselves and their horse. 4. Talk through how to recognise the side your horse is stiffer too and why it is important to build up stretches gradually 5. Participants to practice carrot stretches in pairs (hold the horse for each other) and make notes on how easy the horse finds the stretches 6. Discuss how the stretches can be included as part of a routine 7. Where possible encourage participants to include carrot stretches as part of their daily routine for a number of weeks and monitor. Participants who ride weekly at a centre can be encouraged to include carrot stretches before and after their ride |
| *10 mins* | SUMMARY  Recap on why stretching is valuable for horses (and riders!)  Importance of only stretching warm muscles  You may want to consider inviting a local Equine Sports Massage Therapist or similar to do a demonstration or workshop for your participants. |
|  | Progression  Encourage participants to incorporate carrot stretches to their horses daily routine/weekly ride |

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| Name |  | Level | Platinum |
| Topic | Caring for your horse | Lesson | 4 |
| Subject | Carrot stretches | Location | Yard |
| Resources & Requirements | Carrots (lots of!) cut lengthways into strips or other suitable treats, suitable horses, headcollers and leadropes, suitable area for stretching, paints/chalk, diagram of muscles or access to anatomy app | | |

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| Time | Activity |
| *20 mins* | INTRODUCTION:  Welcome  Safety information  Introduce session  Recap on dynamic stretches and previous session on carrot stretches |
| *60*  *mins* | **ACTIVITIES:**   1. Discuss which of the horses muscles looking to build up/stretch and their location 2. Paint or chalk the outline of muscles to highlight ones being stretched 3. Work through variety of stretches and encourage participants to look at how the horse uses his muscles. Encourage them to notice if the horse is standing square/tipping his head/bending equally 4. Discuss any differences between horses  * Remember to leave time to wash the horse off after! |
| *10 mins* | SUMMARY  Group discussion |
|  | Progression  Learn names and location of superficial muscles  Consider inviting a local Equine Sports Massage Therapist or similar to do a demonstration/workshop for your group |

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| Name |  | Level | Platinum |
| Topic | Caring for your horse | Lesson | 5 |
| Subject | Trimming | Location | Yard |
| Resources & Requirements | Suitable horses or ponies, online videos clips to view different methods, equipment for trimming such as: scissors, mane combs, clippers, thinning comb, comb blade, steps | | |

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| Time | Activity |
| *20 mins* | INTRODUCTION:  Welcome  Safety information  Introduce session: trimming and tidying horses  Discuss why you might want to trim a horse. Make a list of reasons. Discuss why you wouldn’t trim a horse.  What areas of horse can you trim? Whiskers – why shouldn’t trim these. |
| *60*  *mins* | **ACTIVITIES:**   1. Talk through the different items and methods you can use for trimming. Ask the group what methods they use and why. There are lots of online tutorials on trimming and clipping, watch some suitable clips of how to and how not to trim! 2. Demonstrate on a suitable horse:   **Mane**  Mane pulling verses cutting with blade – research shows that mane pulling is stressful and painful for the horse. What other methods are available?  Bridle path  Can also include loosely plaiting the mane to one side to lay the mane flat after shortening.  **Jaw and ears**  How to hold head steady, gently press ear together – not to trim inside the ear  **Legs**  How to trim using scissors and comb and/or clippers. If using clippers – safety: circuit breaker, suitable area, PPE, crouch to side of leg don’t kneel  **Tail trimming** is covered in caring silver but can be included here as well  **Quarter marks**  Although not required as part of the assessment, talk about quarter marks and how to apply them. Use a stencil and then challenge participants to create their own!   1. Participants to practice in pairs or small groups. If no horses/ponies available for trimming, participant should be able to demonstrate methods without actual trimming of the hair. |
| *10 mins* | SUMMARY  Reasons why trim horse  Various methods of trimming  Depending on horses available you may want to split this over several sessions |
|  | Progression  Practice trimming and tidying of horses and ponies  Create own quarter mark |

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| Name |  | Level | Platinum |
| Topic | Caring for your horse | Lesson | 6 |
| Subject | Turnout competition | Location | Yard |
| Resources & Requirements | Suitable horses, items for trimming such as: scissors, mane combs, clippers, thinning comb, comb blade, steps, quarter marks | | |

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| Time | Activity |
| *20 mins* | INTRODUCTION:  Welcome  Safety information  Introduce session: trimming and tidying horses  Recap from previous session  Recap on how to bath or spot wash a horse (weather dependent) |
| *60*  *mins* | **ACTIVITIES:**   1. Participants pair up or work in small groups to prepare a horse for an in- hand turnout competition 2. Horses can be trimmed and tidied, thoroughly groomed or bathed/washed depending on the weather. Quarter marks applied 3. Horses judged on quality of trimming, shortening, tail cut straight and tangle free, how inventive the quarter marks are and how well they stay on! |
| *20 mins* | SUMMARY  Prizes awarded for best turned out, most inventive quarter mark |
|  | Progression  Prepare horses for competition |

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